

## REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1, 3, and 20 are pending, with Claim 1 being independent. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended. Claim 20 has been added.

Claims 1 and 3 were rejected again under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,992,817 (Aoyama, et al.). All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, inter alia, that, for each sensor block of the plurality of sensor blocks, every time the operation for accumulating image signal components in the sensor block is finished, the reading processing circuit performs the reading processing control and, if necessary, the changing circuit changes the reading processing control.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that Aoyama, et al. fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed feature as recited, inter alia, in Claim 1.

Applicant respectfully submits that Aoyama, et al. shows, e.g., that accumulation is effected and if necessary a jump is made to focus detection of the active type before the accumulation is completed (e.g., col. 12, lines 13-19), which Applicant respectfully submits provides neither a description nor a suggestion of at least the above-discussed claimed feature including the recitation of --finished--.

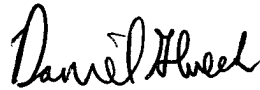
It is further respectfully submitted that there has been no showing of any indication of motivation in the cited document that would lead one having ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the above-discussed combination of claimed features.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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